


How To Pass The 'So What?' Test



Cutting through the clutter
to get your message heard.

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What's the 'So What? Test?



- It's the question you never want your audience to ask.
- It's the standard against which all your communications efforts should be measured.

What we'll talk about...




- Establishing truths.
- The communications landscape
- Identifying audiences
- Understanding audiences
- Targeting the right media
- Creating the right message

Some Universal Truths



- I love my job.
- I have a passion for what I do.
- I'm here to share that passion. And learn.
- It's a discussion, not a lecture. Join in!

Truth #1: You don't understand your audience




- Good ideas only come with understanding your audience.
- Good ideas only come with understanding the media.
- You don't understand your audience.

Truth #2: Your audience doesn't care.



- The communications landscape is fractionated beyond belief.
- Mass media is being replaced by personalized infotainment delivery, because audiences do care about things.
- The audience is suspicious.


Now what? *Identify!*



- Apportion your audience
- Electeds, opinion leaders. Business.
- Civilians: buyers/lookers; users/abusers
- Embrace the continuum!

Create a universe!

Research!



- Information is power!
- Quantitative: age and gender demographics...and *geography*.
- Qualitative: attitudes/lifestyles/media choices

And I can find this where?



- In your own backyard: industry research, best practices
- Media sources: local, national
- Ask 'em! Do a survey.

Ready...fire...aim?



- Re-learn your media opportunities. Find new ways to reach people.
- Ask the same questions about media that you asked about your audience.
- Acquire both qualitative and quantitative knowledge. Stay current.

Truth #3: The media ain't what it used to be.



- Newspapers are struggling to stay relevant.
- Television audiences are down.
- Radio station ownership is collapsing.

Apply the 80/20 rule.



- Prioritize media. You can't be all things to all people. Target your efforts.
- Build relationships. Go see someone. Evangelize!
- Kill your fax machine!

Truth #4: The Internet is your friend. *Embrace!*



- This new pipeline may be the fattest. And the fastest. And the cheapest.
- Use best practices: COPE. Push marketing. Linkage. Search thingys.
- Measure. Evaluate. Respond.

Upside-down creative



- Use your newfound knowledge to evaluate the message.
- Form follows function. Make your words fit the audience.
- Do mother-in-law research

Truth #5: Mark Twain had it right!



- Short and sweet.

William Strunk had it right, too.



- Use vibrant, demonstrative language.

Build an arsenal.



- Create key message points and a mission statement. *Quick and easy, serves six.*
- Create rich background material.
- Present well. (Is your fax machine dead yet? What are you waiting for?)

Did I say go see someone?



- Build relationships. Create top-of-mind awareness.
- Be a resource.
- Be prepared. Eliminate questions. Do their work for them.

Own something.



- Create something: an event, a service, a resource...that belongs to *you*.
- Promote above the line wherever possible.
No logo soup.
- Build a brand. Protect your flanks.

Get a strategic partner.



- Build a primary, strong relationship with media, a business, an organization that targets your universe.
- Share efforts to forge new relationships in your universe.
- $1 + 1 = 3$

Truth #6: Achieve both reach and frequency.



- Reach= unique eyeballs. Frequency means repetitive impressions.
- Remember COPE? Play it a lot.
- When you're getting sick of a message, it's just beginning to gain awareness with the people you're trying to influence.

So...what? Where are we?



- You've increased your understanding of the audience and the media they use.
- You've refined your message in response, and you've changed how you deliver it.
- Congratulations! You're ready to take the 'so what?' test...and pass!

Thanks for watching!



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